

Latest arrangements on LCSD public services

The Leisure and Cultural Services Department (LCSD) announced today (April 28) that, in view of the latest situation of COVID-19, some leisure venues will be reopened in phases on May 6 and May 11. Some libraries and museums will reopen starting from May 6.

For leisure venues, non-fee charging outdoor leisure facilities to be reopened on May 6 (Wednesday) include running tracks in sports grounds (for jogging only), fitness equipment, pebble walking trails, cycling facilities, badminton courts, tennis courts, skateparks, skateboard grounds, roller skating rinks, model car play areas, model boat pools and table tennis tables.

Fee charging outdoor leisure facilities to be reopened on the same day include tennis courts, bowling greens, Ngau Chi Wan Park Archery Range, Shek O Obstacle Golf Course and the archery range, golf driving range and practice greens at Tuen Mun Recreation and Sports Centre.

Those to be reopened on May 11 (Monday) are all indoor leisure facilities. They are badminton courts, squash courts, table tennis rooms/tables, the cycling track of Hong Kong Velodrome, indoor golf driving bays, indoor bowling greens, indoor jogging tracks and indoor tennis courts.

Apart from the above facilities, other leisure facilities temporarily closed earlier such as public swimming pools, beaches, soccer pitches, basketball courts, gateball courts and children's play equipment will continue to be closed until further notice. Please refer to the LCSD's website (www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/facilities/facilitieslist/landsports.html) for details of the facilities to be reopened.

Members of the public can book the reopened fee charging leisure facilities via the Internet Booking Service of Leisure Link starting from May 5 (Tuesday). Leisure Link Booking Office of the District Leisure Services Offices will resume service on May 6. Leisure Link Booking Office and Self-service Kiosk of the above venues will resume booking services on the same day of reopening of leisure facilities.

For refund arrangements in relation to earlier venue closures (there is no reallocation arrangement), the hirer may submit a completed refund application form together with the original booking permit to the reopened LCSD leisure venue or a Leisure Link Booking Office at a District Leisure Services Office. The application form can be downloaded from www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/aboutlcsd/forms/refund.html.

The LCSD appeals to venue users to comply with the Prevention and Control of Disease (Prohibition on Group Gathering) Regulation (Cap. 599G) on the prohibition of group gatherings of more than four people. The LCSD will

adopt special measures at sports facilities to be reopened. Measures including stepping up cleansing works, arranging temperature checks for people entering indoor venues, limiting the numbers of users at venues, opening alternate courts/rinks/tables and closing spectator stands. Changing rooms and showering facilities at leisure venues will be temporarily closed to reduce the risk of the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

In addition, processing and acceptance of individual and block booking applications for the department's non-fee charging land recreation and sports facilities, block booking applications for the fee charging land recreation and sports facilities, applications for use of wedding venues, amphitheatres and non-fee charging leisure venues for non-designated use/sales activities as well as recreation and sports programmes are suspended until further notice.

Regarding cultural venues, Hong Kong Central Library and six other major public libraries, namely City Hall Public Library, Kowloon Public Library, Tsuen Wan Public Library, Sha Tin Public Library, Tuen Mun Public Library and Ping Shan Tin Shui Wai Public Library, will partially reopen on May 6 and implement special opening hours. The opening hours of the seven libraries will be 1pm to 8pm from Mondays to Saturdays and 9am to 5pm on Sundays and public holidays. To avoid people gathering, the libraries will arrange admission by sessions, with each session lasting about one hour. Admission slips will be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis for entry to each session. Children under 12 will only be allowed to enter when accompanied by an adult. Facilities of the above seven libraries to be reopened include the adult, young adult and children's libraries. Limited services, including lending and returning of library materials and picking up reserved library materials, will resume. Other facilities including the newspaper and periodical areas, Reference Libraries, Computer Information Centres, computer facilities and study rooms will remain closed. The self-service library stations at Island East Sports Centre Sitting-out Area, the Hong Kong Cultural Centre and Tsuen Nam Road, Tai Wai, and all book drop services of the Hong Kong Public Libraries including those at MTR Central, Kowloon Tong and Nam Cheong stations will resume on the same day. Public libraries will continue to provide online services such as e-Books and e-Databases. Please visit www.hkpl.gov.hk/en/index.html for details.

Thirteen LCSD museums, including the Hong Kong Museum of Art, the Hong Kong Heritage Museum, the Hong Kong Museum of History, the Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware, the Law Uk Folk Museum, the Lei Cheng Uk Han Tomb Museum, the Sheung Yiu Folk Museum, the Sam Tung Uk Museum, the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum, the Fireboat Alexander Grantham Exhibition Gallery, the Hong Kong Railway Museum, the Hong Kong Film Archive and the Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre (hiring studios only) will partially reopen their exhibition facilities on May 6, with interactive exhibits and public programmes temporarily suspended. Special opening hours from 10am to 5pm daily (except on the regular closing day) will be implemented. Among the 13 museums, the Hong Kong Museum of Art, the Hong Kong Heritage Museum and the Hong Kong Museum of History will arrange visits by sessions, each lasting two hours, to limit visitor flow. Visitors will be able to enter the museums on a first-

come, first-served basis. Children aged under 12 must be accompanied by an adult. For details, please visit www.lcsd.gov.hk/en/facilities/facilitieslist/museums/lcsdmuseums.html.

All performance venues will not be opened before the end of May. The Chinese Opera Festival (COF) and the International Arts Carnival (IAC), scheduled to be held from June to August 2020 originally, have been cancelled. The LCSD organises the COF and IAC annually, inviting numerous professional arts groups from the Mainland and overseas to come to Hong Kong to offer audiences high-quality performing arts programmes and promote cultural exchange in conjunction with local arts groups. Fifteen arts groups from the Mainland and overseas have been invited to perform in Hong Kong this year. Due to the pandemic and numerous uncertainties in global business travels, the LCSD and participating arts groups reached a consensus on cancelling the two festivals this year.

Apart from maintaining URBTIX Internet and mobile app ticketing and hotline services, box offices and ticket dispensing machines at LCSD performance venues will resume operation with special opening hours (from noon to 6.30pm daily) from May 6. For events presented/sponsored by the LCSD and some organised by hirers which have been cancelled due to venue closure arising from the pandemic, LCSD will start arranging ticket refund from May 6. Please visit www.urbtix.hk/internet/en_US/newsDetail/167774 for more details.

Visitors to the public libraries, museums and box offices of performance venues are advised to wear their own masks and will be subject to temperature checks before admission. Enhanced measures including cleaning between sessions will be conducted.

All music centres of the Music Office will remain closed. Apart from the above-mentioned public libraries and museums, the rest of the relevant cultural facilities will continue to be temporarily closed.

The LCSD will continue to monitor the situation closely and review the arrangements in a timely manner.